

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
NATIONAL BUSINESS CENTER
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In Reply Refer To:
1170/1400-630
(BC650,CO950,NI100)P

October 9, 1997

Instruction Memorandum No. BC-98-002
Instruction Memorandum No. CO-98-001
Instruction Memorandum No. NI-98-4000

Expires: 9/30/99

To: All Denver National Centers, Colorado State Office, and Special
National Projects & Initiatives Employees

From: Denver National Center Directors, State Director, Colorado, and
Special National Projects & Initiatives Director

Subject: Emergency Situation Procedures (Inclement Weather)

The following procedures apply to the above offices during inclement weather and other emergency situations. Employees are encouraged to keep a copy of this memorandum at their workstation and a copy at home for reference during emergency conditions.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS OCCURRING DURING DUTY HOURS

1. The Denver Federal Executive Board (DFEB) Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson will obtain input from the local authorities to determine if conditions warrant early dismissal.

2. If the decision is to recommend early dismissal, the DFEB Chairperson/Vice Chairperson will activate the DFEB "hotline" by recording the following message:

"Today is ... and the time is ... The DFEB recommends early dismissal of Federal employees. You are requested to implement your agency procedures for early dismissal due to weather conditions (or other emergency if applicable)."

3. The Group Administrator for the Denver Center Support Services Group (or acting) and the Director, Colorado State Office (or acting) will call the DFEB hotline for the recommended course of action. Employees should not call the DFEB office for dismissal information. It is DFEB's policy that the "hotline" number be kept confidential and only given to those persons within each agency

and installations who are designated or who have the authority, in the absence of the agency or installation head, to release employees. Under no circumstances is this number to be disseminated to employees.

4. The Denver National Centers and the Colorado State Office will make a bilateral decision to dismiss employees. The dismissal time will be announced by management.

As necessary, agency release times may be staggered in order to minimize traffic disruption.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS OCCURRING DURING OFF-DUTY HOURS

1. The DFEB Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson will determine that an emergency situation exists which warrants consideration of delayed reporting or nonreporting of personnel to federal offices and installations. Input from local authorities will be obtained prior to making a determination. Every effort will be made to make a decision and record the information on the DFEB "hotline" by 5:30 a.m. of the workday in question.

2. Upon DFEB recommendation to have delayed reporting/closure of federal offices and installations, the following television and radio stations will be notified with appropriate reporting or closure information. **These are the only sources of information that DFEB will use. Information broadcasts on other stations are not considered official.**

Radio Station
KOA AM 850

Television Station
KCNC Channel 4

3. Employees are to tune into the above stations for reporting/closure information. The code words to listen for are: "THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD." Possible DFEB recommendations are as follows:

a. "The Federal Executive Board is closed." (All BLM employees are to interpret this as meaning all BLM locations are closed for the entire day.)

b. "The Federal Executive Board is on late reporting." (All BLM employees are to interpret this as meaning all BLM locations are open, but reporting time will be delayed.)

Note 1: BLM management may override the DFEB recommendation to close. In this case, an internal calling system will be used to inform all employees of the BLM decision to close. Each National Center, State Office, and the Special Initiatives & Projects Office will be responsible for developing its own telephone cascade list. Supervisors may also want to record the delayed reporting or closure information as a message on their voice mail at work for employees to call.

Note 2: This plan is not applicable to certain operations or essential employees who must continue on the job regardless of any delayed reporting/closure plans. BLM essential employees will be notified by their individual supervisors about their reporting requirements.

Note 3: All employees are to presume, unless otherwise notified, that their offices or activities will be open each regular workday regardless of weather or other emergency conditions which may develop. Employees are expected to cope with difficult driving conditions and moderate disruptions of the public transportation system.

Leave Policy

If the Denver Federal Center and/or the Colorado State Office are not closed but poor driving conditions cause employees to be late for work, supervisors are authorized to approve administrative leave for short periods (up to one hour) at their discretion, according to the severity of the circumstances.

Administrative leave for emergency situations more than one hour can only be granted after the National Center Directors, State Director and Special Initiatives & Projects Officer have determined, that, on an office wide basis, more than one hour of administrative leave is appropriate. Such leave should be properly entered on the time and attendance reports as administrative leave. In the case that a delayed reporting is recommended by the DFEB or the Directors, the one hour of supervisory granted administrative leave is not allowable. Employees who report to work after the specified time will be charged with annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP), or Absence Without Official Leave (AWOL), as appropriate.

Questions are often asked about employees absent on approved prescheduled leave (annual or sick) on days offices are closed because of an emergency situation. The effect on such employees depends on whether the office closed prior to the start of the workday or during work hours. When an office is closed before the workday begins, there is no official workday and employees are given administrative leave. This includes employees who had annual or sick leave approved in advance. When an office is closed during work hours and employees are dismissed early, administrative leave will not be granted to employees already in leave status. Such employees are charged the appropriate leave for the full day.

Alternate Work Schedule Impacts

Employees on alternate work schedules will be affected in the following ways in situations of office closure caused by emergency conditions: When offices are closed prior to the start of the workday, the maximum number of hours an employee on a flexible work schedule can record as administrative leave is 8. (Flexible work schedules include maxiflex, alternate workday, and alternate workweek.) Fewer than 8 hours work will be recorded by such employees when the employee needs less than 8 to reach 80 hours for the pay period.

Employees on compressed work schedules (5/4/9 or 4-10s) record the number of hours they were scheduled to work that day as administrative leave. If the scheduled lieu day occurs when administrative leave is granted, the employee will not be given administrative leave.

When offices are closed during the workday, employees on flexible work schedules record the difference in the number of hours worked from 8 hours as administrative leave (however, they would record less hours if they needed the smaller number to reach 80 hours for the pay period). Employees on compressed work schedules record the difference in the number of hours worked and number of hours they were scheduled to work that day as administrative leave.

Individual Preparation

Employees are encouraged to plan ahead for their other obligations and inform their supervisors of potential problems. For example, if school or senior citizen center closure will necessitate your absence on snow days, inform your supervisor now. Informed planning, on an individual and organizational basis, is the best way to mitigate the impacts of any emergency situation that may occur.

Questions concerning the emergency situation procedures should be directed to Robert Pinkney (BC-650) at 236-9420, or Greg Lancaster (CO-951) at 239-3676. For questions concerning leave policy, please contact Phyllis O'Neill (HR-220) at 236-6505, or Susan Mielke (CO-953) at 239-3937.

/s/ Brian Bernard (Acting)
Director, Colorado State

/s/ Robert Pinkney (Acting)
Director, National

Office

Business Center

/s/ Mike Kirby (Acting)
Director, National Applied
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/s/ Linda D. Sedbrook
Director, National Human
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/s/ Rick Graham (Acting)
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Authenticated by: Lynne Lotvedt, Staff Assistant (BC-650)

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